

# Discipline Disproportionality: Measurement and Reporting

Presentation to:

*Board of Education Special Committee to Review the Standards of Accreditation*

April 2021

# Purpose

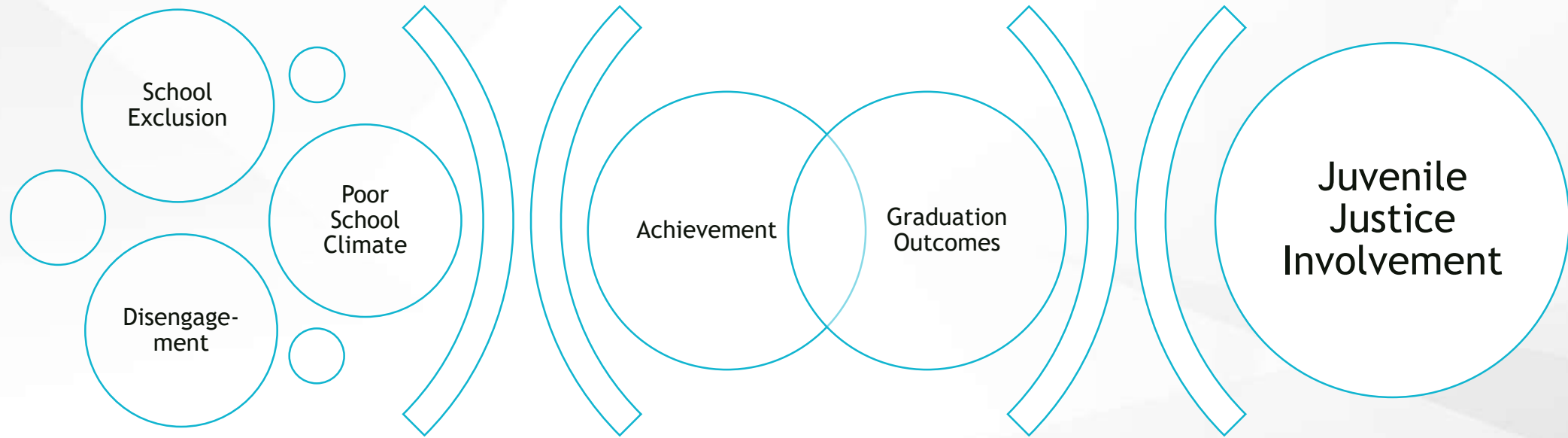
- To provide information on VDOE's current and future measurement strategy for discipline disproportionality
- Discipline Disproportionality Working Group membership:
  - Office of Accountability
  - Office of Data Services
  - Office of Equity and Community Engagement
  - Office of Research
  - Office of Student Services
  - Office of Program Improvement (Special Education)
  - Office of Special Education Data

# Defining Exclusionary Discipline and Disproportionality

# Exclusionary Discipline

- Describes any type of school disciplinary action that removes or excludes a student from their usual educational setting
  - National Clearinghouse on Supportive School Discipline
- Most commonly reported exclusionary discipline practices are out-of-school suspensions and expulsions
- Also includes, but less consistently reported:
  - Removal from class
  - Alternative placements
  - Disciplinary sanctions where instructional services are offered

# Impact of Exclusionary Discipline



Russell J. Skiba, Mariella I. Arredondo, & Natasha T. Williams. (2014). *More Than a Metaphor: The Contribution of Exclusionary Discipline to a School-to-Prison Pipeline*, Equity & Excellence in Education, 47:4, pp. 546-564.

# What is discipline disproportionality?

- Disproportionality: a group's representation in a particular category that exceeds the amount expected for that group
- In Virginia, Black students comprise 22% of total student enrollment, but 54% of all students suspended (2018-2019 school year)



# Model of Discipline Disproportionality

Research suggests four areas that contribute to disproportionality...



...and two factors that do not contribute to disproportionality.

Differential Student Behavior

For the same discipline incident, Black students were more likely to be suspended than their White peers<sup>1</sup>

Student Poverty

Poor Black students are 10 percentage points likelier than poor White students in the same school, grade-level, and year to be suspended<sup>2</sup>

Tefera, A., Siegel-Hawley, G., & Levy, R. (2017). *Why do racial disparities in school discipline exist? The role of policies, processes, people, and places*. Richmond, VA. Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium.

# Calculating Disproportionality

- Typically expressed as a relative risk (RR)
- Likelihood of an outcome for one group divided by the likelihood of the same outcome for a reference group
- Counts individuals only once, regardless of how many times the outcome occurs
- Estimates the strength of the relationship between an outcome and the group at risk



# Calculating Disproportionality

Relative Risk	<div> <div>Number of Black students suspended /</div> <div>Number of Black students</div> </div> <div> <div>Number of non-Black students suspended /</div> <div>Number of non-Black students</div> </div>
Example	<div> <div>30 Black students suspended /</div> <div>475 Black students</div> </div> <div> <div>175 non-Black students suspended /</div> <div>8,500 non-Black students</div> </div> <div> <div>6.32% / 2.06% = 3.07</div> </div> <div> <div>Interpretation: Black students are 3.07 times as likely to be suspended compared to non-Black students.</div> </div>

# Current Measurement of Discipline Disproportionality and Data Uses

# Use Cases

1. Disproportionality in Special Education
2. Virginia Tiered Systems of Support
3. Public Reporting and Analysis

# Significant Disproportionality in Special Education

- 20 U.S.C. 1418(d) requires:
  - States to determine if significant disproportionality based on race/ethnicity is occurring with respect to the:
    - Identification of children as children with disabilities, including identification as children with particular impairments;
    - Placement of children in particular educational settings; and
    - Incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions, including suspensions and expulsions.
  - School divisions to reserve fifteen percent of their Part B funds (special education funds) to provide Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services to serve children in the division.

# Significant Disproportionality in Special Education

- Federal guidance: states must consult with their stakeholders and the State Advisory Panel to develop a reasonable methodology and thresholds
- Virginia's methodology, based on stakeholder feedback:
  - Relative risk thresholds of 3.0 or greater for 3 consecutive years
  - Also includes considerations for group size
- Data source: VDOE's Discipline, Crime and Violence Data Collection

# Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS)

- VTSS uses multiple forms of **discipline data** in a data-informed decision making process to strengthen the effectiveness of tiered supports across all levels of a system of supports.
- VTSS State Level:
  - State level teams use data for decision as it relates to project goals and outcomes
- VTSS Division Level:
  - Division Leadership Teams and School Leadership teams use data to action plan:
    - To support positive outcomes for students, families, and educators
    - To most effectively focus resources on identified areas of need

# VTSS Disciplinary Data

Number of:

- Office Discipline Referrals
- In-School Suspensions
- Out-of-School Suspensions
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity Race
  - Disability Type
- Source: Outcome data reported by participating schools and divisions

Additional Data Sources:

- Standards of Learning
  - Reading, Math
- Graduation Rates
- Chronic Absenteeism
- School Readiness

## Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports

VTSS reports disciplinary data in multiple forms:

- Annual reporting for federal grants and stakeholders
- Outcome summary data for Systems Coaches supporting school division teams
- On-going data informed decision making in VTSS Leadership at the state level





# Public Reporting Tools

- Data source: Discipline, Crime and Violence Data Collection
- Safe Schools Information Report
  - Query multiple layers of disciplinary actions and offense types
    - Race/ethnicity
    - Gender
    - Disability
- School Quality Profiles
  - Number of offenses by school for select categories
  - Report percent student population vs. percent experiencing disciplinary action by race/ethnicity
    - Short-term and long-term Suspensions
    - Expulsions

# SQPs: Learning Climate

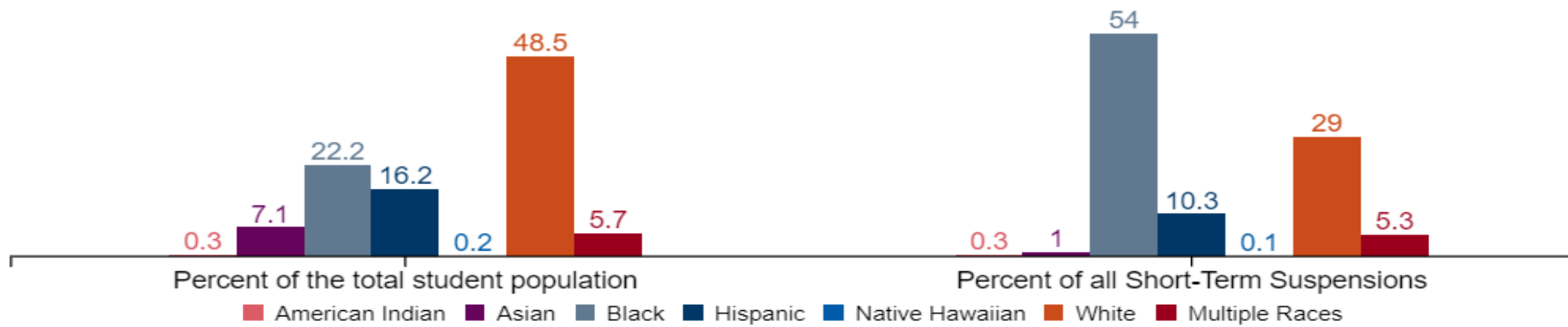
## Standards of Accreditation (SOA) Offenses Data

2018-2019 Offenses	
	Number of Offenses
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Offenses	18,015
Disorderly or Disruptive Behavior Offenses	75,125
Other Offenses Against Persons	46,678
All Other Offenses	5,388
Property Offenses	2,730
Weapons Offenses	2,392
Offenses Against Staff	3,540
Offenses Against Student	12,979
Technology Offenses	2,619

# SQPs: Learning Climate

## Short-Term Suspensions

Short-Term Suspensions: 2018-2019



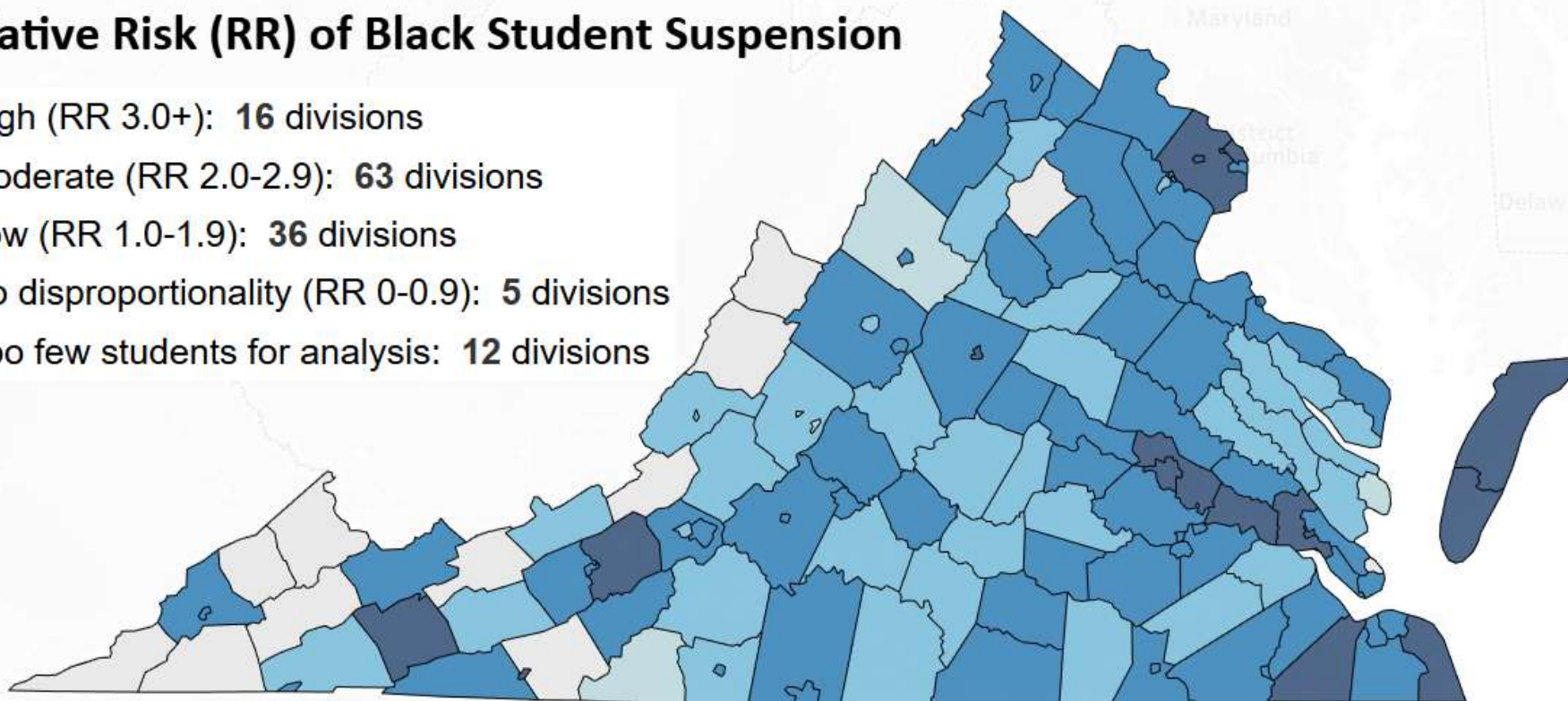
## Quarterly Research Bulletin:

More than half of school divisions have moderate or high disproportionality among Black student suspensions

### Disproportionality among Black Student Suspensions Compared to Non-Black Students

#### Relative Risk (RR) of Black Student Suspension

- High (RR 3.0+): 16 divisions
- Moderate (RR 2.0-2.9): 63 divisions
- Low (RR 1.0-1.9): 36 divisions
- No disproportionality (RR 0-0.9): 5 divisions
- Too few students for analysis: 12 divisions

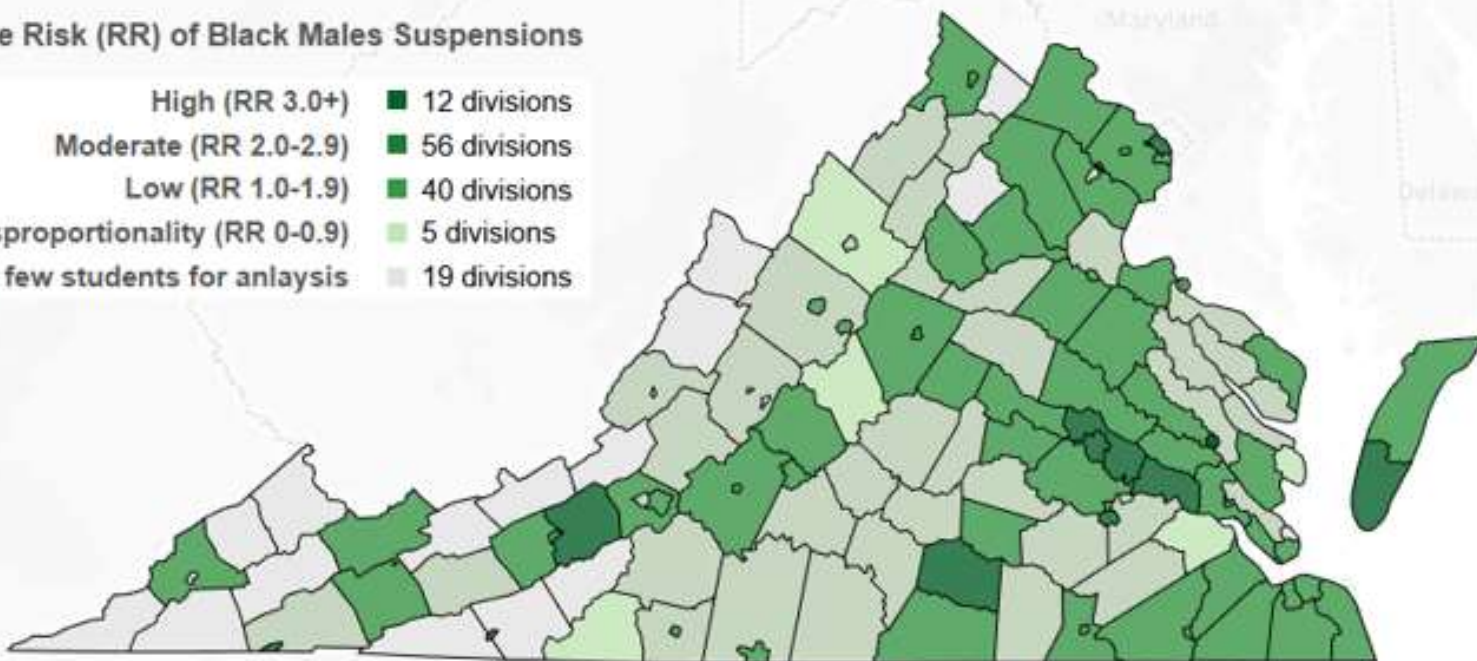


Source: 2018-2019 Discipline, Crime and Violence Data Collection, Virginia Department of Education



# Relative Risk (RR) of Black Males Suspensions

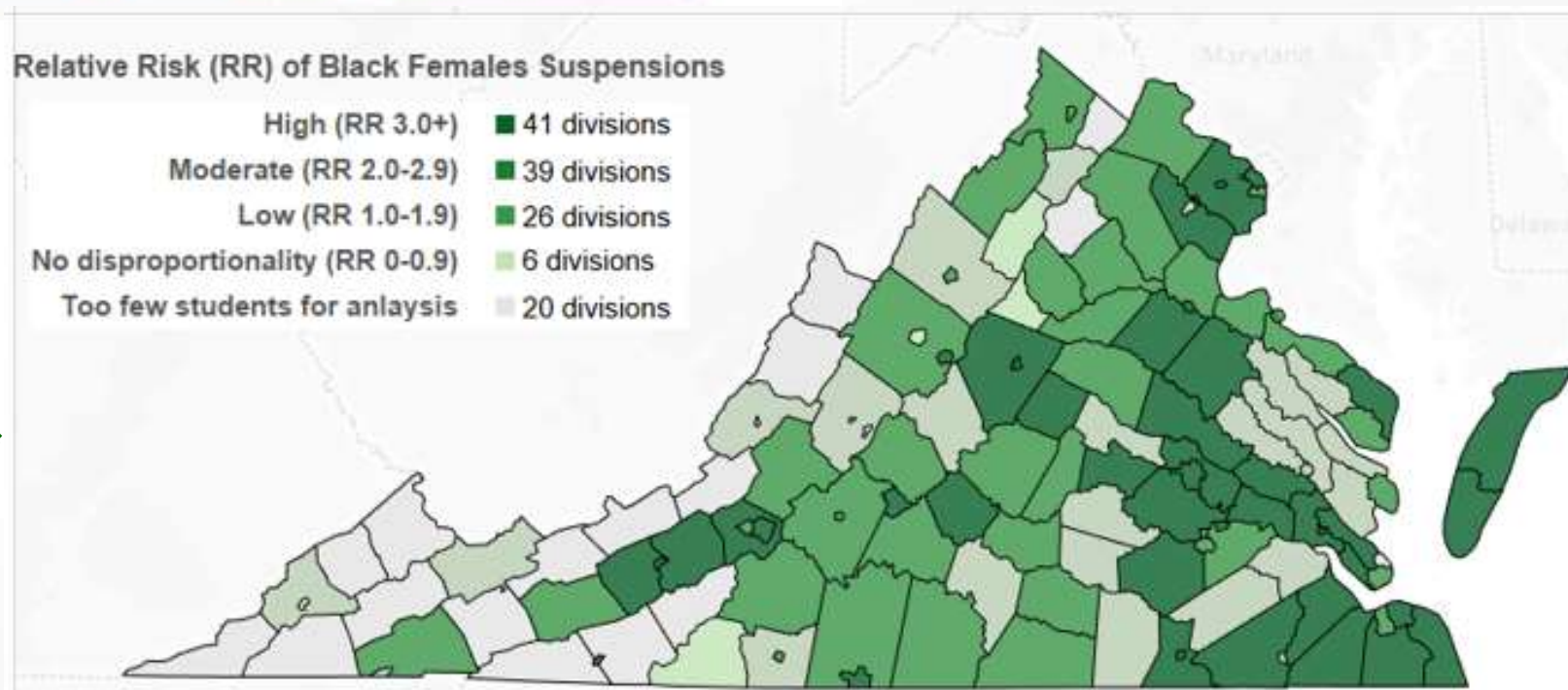
High (RR 3.0+)	12 divisions
Moderate (RR 2.0-2.9)	56 divisions
Low (RR 1.0-1.9)	40 divisions
No disproportionality (RR 0-0.9)	5 divisions
Too few students for analysis	19 divisions



9% of school divisions report high discipline disproportionality among Black males compared non-Black males

# Relative Risk (RR) of Black Females Suspensions

High (RR 3.0+)	41 divisions
Moderate (RR 2.0-2.9)	39 divisions
Low (RR 1.0-1.9)	26 divisions
No disproportionality (RR 0-0.9)	6 divisions
Too few students for analysis	20 divisions

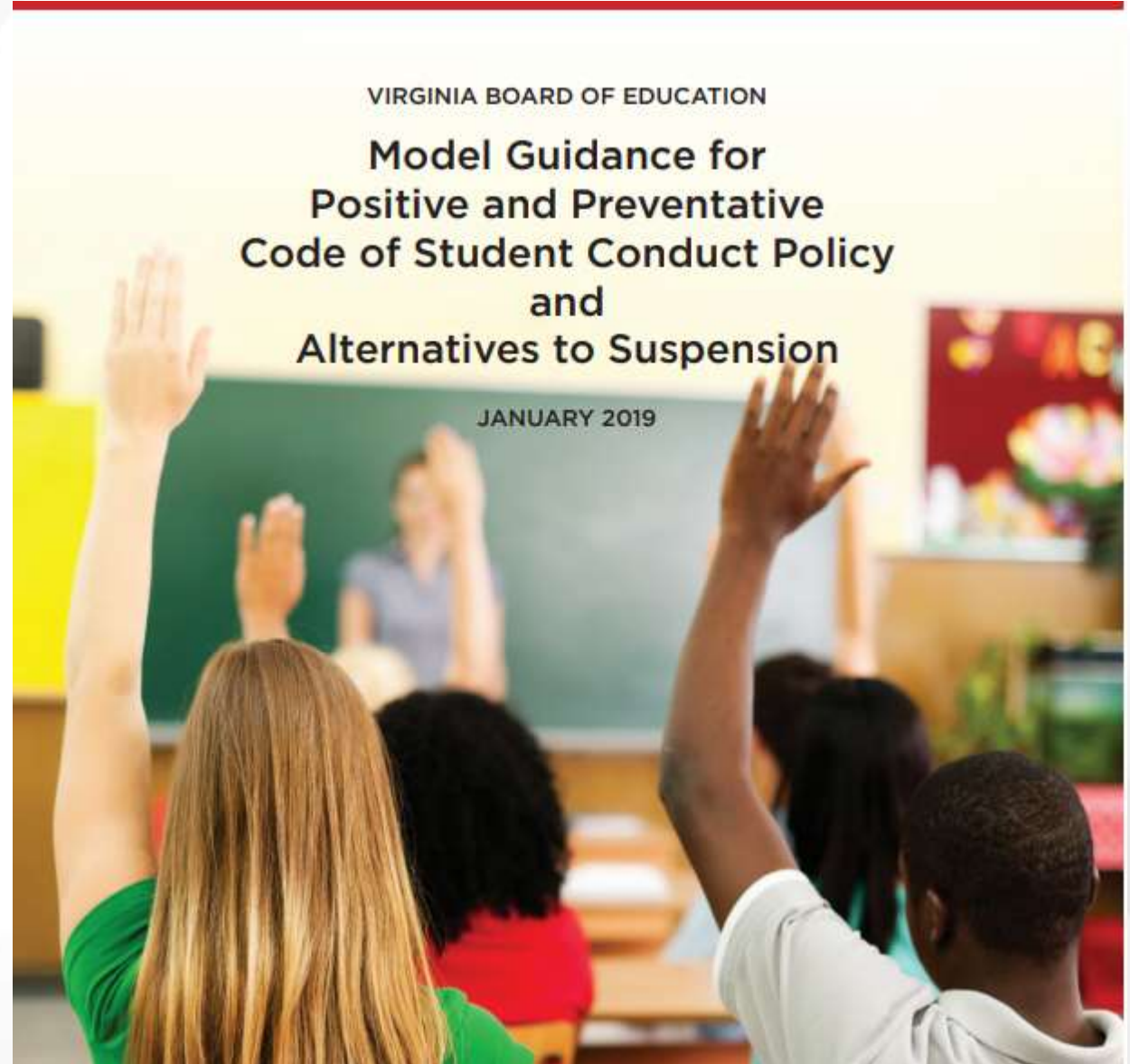


31% of school divisions report high discipline disproportionality among Black females compared to non-Black females

# Future Measurement of Discipline Disproportionality

Student Behavior and Administrative Response (SBAR) Data Collection

The SBAR data collection will inform practice to improve opportunities and outcomes for students.



# Reframing School Discipline

## Discipline, Crime and Violence (1991 to 2020)

- Criminal
- Punishment
- Exclusion
- Record of Exclusions

## Student Behavior and Administrative Response (2021 and beyond)

- Restorative
- Intervention
- Inclusion
- Record of Responses



## Behavior Lens

- A. Behaviors that impede Academic Progress
- B. Behaviors related to School Operations
- C. Relationship Behaviors
- D. Behaviors that present a Safety Concern
- E. Behaviors that Endanger Self or Others
- F. Behaviors identified as Persistently Dangerous



# Response Lens: Outcomes and Opportunities

- Discipline Sanctions
  - Examples: class removals, sanctions with and without instructional services, and loss of privileges
- Behavioral Interventions
  - Examples: parent contact, referrals, restorative practices
- Instructional Supports
  - Examples: changes in placement, virtual programs, supports with and without face-to-face teacher contact

# Updated Reporting with SBAR

- Query capability on VDOE website through Build a Table tool
- Development and dissemination of Division Equity Report
- Opportunity for new metrics on the School Quality Profiles

# Summary

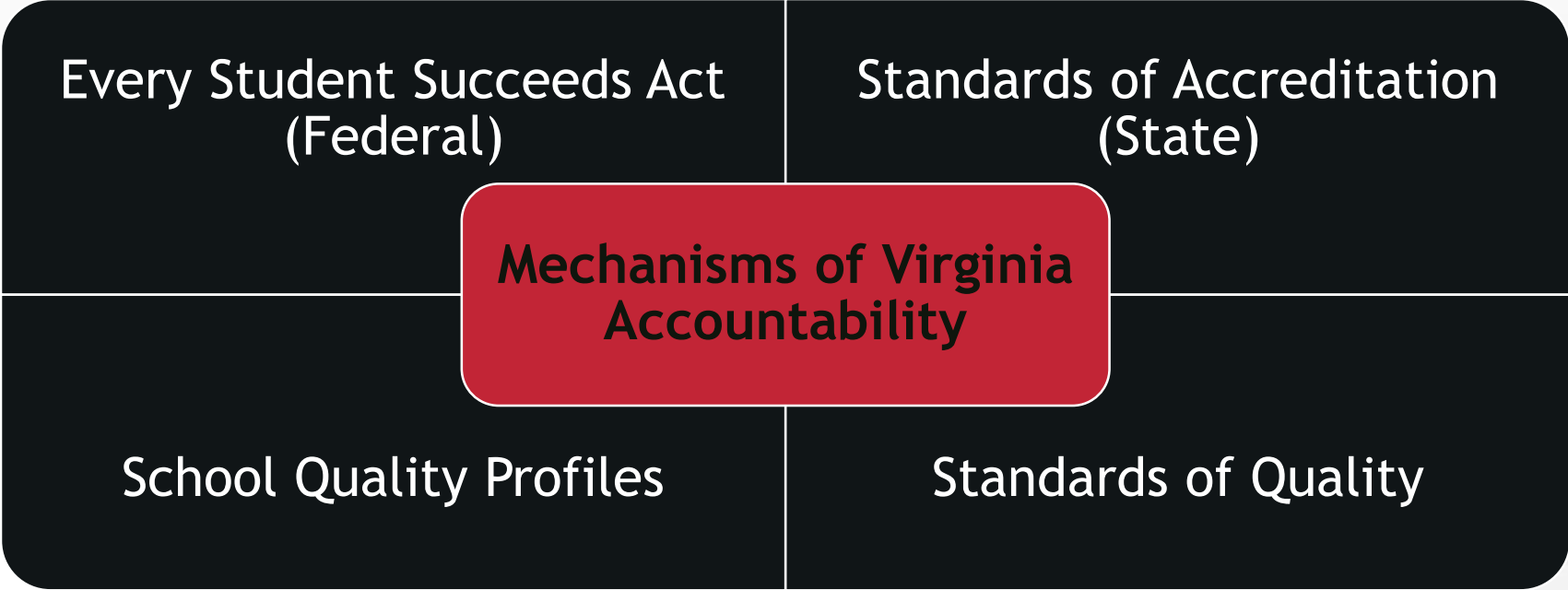
- Multiple program offices at VDOE currently calculate and report exclusionary discipline and discipline disproportionality
- With the implementation of SBAR beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, VDOE has an opportunity:
  - Inform practices through more comprehensive information on student behavior, discipline sanctions, behavioral interventions, and instructional supports
  - Standardize the definitions and calculations of metrics
  - Create consistency in communication and reporting

# Considerations for Accountability

# Discipline Disproportionality in Accountability

- Virginia's African American Superintendent's Advisory Council Recommendation:
  - Include discipline disproportionality as an indicator in the state's accountability system
- Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center's Recommendations to Building a Foundation for School Discipline Reform:
  - Incorporate measures of disproportionality in school discipline into state accountability systems

Stern, A., & Rogers, C. (2019). Building a foundation for school discipline reform: Action steps for states to improve the collection and use of data on school discipline. [Policy brief of the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center](#). San Francisco, CA: WestEd.



# State Models

- Requested information from Education Commission of the States on accountability models that include an indicator of discipline disproportionality
- Four states include discipline data in federal accountability models
  - While some states report data by student groups, metrics are focused on exclusionary discipline, not discipline disproportionality
  - Discipline data may be combined with other data into an index



# Federal Accountability Models using Discipline Data

- Weighted accountability models - data are weighted and combined with other metrics to calculate a single rating (e.g., A-F)
  - Iowa:
    - Incident rates of suspensions and expulsions
    - Combined with survey data to calculate a conditions for learning index which is weighted in accountability calculations
  - Rhode Island:
    - Calculates number of out of school suspensions per 100 students
    - Rate is assigned a point value which is then weighted to determine a school's overall star rating

# Federal Accountability Models using Discipline Data

- Matrix accountability models - each indicator is assigned a performance level (similar to Virginia):
  - **California:**
    - Percent of students suspended for an aggregate total of one full day or more during the school year
    - Performance levels are determined via matrix based on current year rate and improvement from previous year
  - **West Virginia:**
    - Calculates percent of students in each school that received zero out-of-school suspensions within a school year
    - Schools are assigned a performance level based on established benchmarks

# Additional References

1. Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C.-G., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review*, 40(1), pp. 85-107.
2. Anderson, Kaitlin, Gary W. Ritter, and Alexandra Boyd. (2018). Do school discipline policies treat students fairly? A second look at school discipline rate disparities. *Educational Policy*.